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SYNOPSIS OF VICTOR MARCHETTI SPEECH

AT NATIONAL PRESS CLUB ON 23 SEPTEMBER 1983

IN CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

(Tape counter readings in parentheses)

About four months ago David Combe's lawyers asked me to read some documents and to come to Australia and testify in Combe's behalf, as an intelligence expert (009). I am mystified by the case--where's the crime? America's businessmen sell to Soviets all the time--"to make a buck"--an old American tradition (031). Even ex-DCI's, like Colby and Helms, become lobbyists and have to register as agents for a foreign government--they do it "for a buck" (055). I guess I just don't understand Australian mores. You have a nice country, but by God, I'm glad I'm an American! (091).

The closest U.S. comparison to the Combe's case was McCarthyism in the U.S. in the early '50s (105). [Here followed a description of the McCarthy era in American politics--as Mr. Marchetti recalls it.] Even the "CIA officer in charge of Covert Actions" was almost a victim of McCarthyism! (115). But now we have civil liberties protection, steps taken by people like the ACLU to see that McCarthyism doesn't happen again--the Privacy and FOI Acts--so the Government can't abuse free Americans (140).

Then came Vietnam--a bad period out of which some good came (147). [Mr. Marchetti gives his impression of President Nixon commenting on Ellsberg "telling the truth" about the Vietnam War--"treason!"] (159).

Similar circumstances led me to write my book [CIA and the Cult of Intelligence] (170). I had been testifying before Congress about CIA abuses, but nothing happened. I was tired of sitting around the Senate cafeteria eating bean soup, so I decided to "go public" [write a book.] The lesson to be learned from my experience is the ineptitude of a so-called professional intelligence organization (183). [Describes his meeting with Admiral Rufus Taylor who tried to discourage his public revelations, the compromise he made--"and two days later the U.S. marshalls knocked on my door!"] (200). However, in the long run the brouhaha about excisions and blank spaces sold copies. CIA was really advertising the book to the public (213). The public got interested in CIA, investigations followed, the public heard many sad tales--it was not what they had been paying CIA to do, and additional controls were put on the Agency (221). [Recalls a debate he had with retired Director Colby on a college campus.] Afterwards we had a chat and he mentioned that the Agency had probably helped sell many copies of my book. I told him, "I thank you, my wife thanks you, my children thank you . . ." (213). An intelligent professional organization would have handled it more discretely (235).

CIA is fallible. There's nothing magical about the intelligence business . . . except the tricks they play (240). They have no greater insight than the general public. This talk about years of training is necessary is nonsense. The tricks they play are on the politicians and the public.

The heart of the matter is secrecy! Only about five percent of the documents classified secret are really secret. Ninety-five percent are not legitimate--this is according to the State Department declassifier! Most secret documents are to keep it secret from Congress and the public (259). They want to keep secret how they manipulate and influence.

Returning to David Combes (268)--shame on the Australian Government! (273). Ivanov was merely doing what a KGB man is supposed to do. The evidence against Combes was flimsy--it doesn't matter, a government is supposed to have balance--it could have been handled better (285). This is the significant: David Combes did not commit any crime. There is no evidence of any conspiracy (290). But his reputation is tarnished and his business destroyed (292). Shame on you Australians (293). No intelligence organization should be allowed to do this. I don't think it could happen in the U.S. today (299)--not because we're the best and brightest. There are just too many protections (303). Be concerned with David Combes--it could happen to you (313).

S E C R E T

OGC 83-09131
2 November 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Classification Review Division
Office of Information Services, DDA

FROM: [REDACTED]
Office of General Counsel

SUBJECT: Marchetti, Victor L.

1. Enclosed please find a cassette tape of a speech given by Subject on 23 September 1983 at the National Press Club in Australia. This is the only copy of the tape. (S)

2. Please review the speech for any disclosure of classified information by Subject and notify the undersigned of your determinations. I can be contacted [REDACTED] (U)

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